

## **I. Amendments to the Claims**

The following listing of claims includes all pending claims. Those being currently amended (relative to their immediate prior version), are denoted by the notation "(currently amended)" and newly added text therein is underlined, while any deleted text is ~~struck through~~. The notation "(original)" refers to claims that were submitted with the application as filed, and remain in their as-filed condition. The notation "(new)" refers to a claim that is being added here for the first time.

1. (currently amended) A composite tubular hockey stick shaft comprising:
  - a) an outer tubular composite construct comprising one or more plies of ~~un-directional~~ uni-directional substantially parallel fibers disposed in a hardened resin matrix;
  - b) an inner tubular composite construct comprising one or more plies of uni-directional substantially parallel fibers disposed in a hardened resin matrix;
  - and
  - c) an elastomer layer disposed between the inner and outer tubular constructs.
2. (original) A composite tubular hockey stick shaft comprising:
  - a) an inner composite construct comprising one or more plies of uni-directional substantially parallel fibers disposed in a hardened resin matrix;
  - b) an outer composite construct comprising one or more plies of uni-directional substantially parallel fibers disposed in a hardened resin matrix; and

c) an elastomer layer disposed between the inner and outer composite constructs.

3. (original) A method of manufacturing a hockey stick comprising:

a) providing a tubular cured hockey stick shaft configured at its lower region to be joined to the heel region of a hockey stick blade;

b) providing an un-cured composite hockey stick blade pre-form configured to be joined to the lower region of a the cured hockey stick shaft;

c) inserting the lower region of the cured hockey stick shaft into the heel region of the uncured hockey stick blade pre-form;

d) inserting the uncured blade pre-form and joined portion of cured shaft composite hockey stick into a mold configured to receive the uncured blade pre-form and at least a portion of the lower region of the cured shaft and to impart the desired exterior shape of the hockey stick blade upon curing; and

e) cure blade pre-form around the interposed lower region of the hockey stick shaft with application of heat.

4. (new) The invention of claim 1 wherein said elastomer layer is constructed of a material that has an ultimate elongation that is approximately equal to or greater than 100%, such that it can be stretched to at least

approximately double its length at rest without rupture, and when released, returns quickly to approximately its pre-stretched length.

5. (new) The invention of claim 1 wherein said elastomer layer has a thickness at rest such that when applied between said first and second constructs, the distance therebetween is less than 1/16<sup>th</sup> inch.

6. (new) The invention of claim 1 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned around the entire lateral periphery of said inner construct.

7. (new) The invention of claim 6 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned around the entire lateral periphery of said inner construct, but is positioned on less than 50% of the periphery of said inner construct.

8. (new) The invention of claim 1 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned along the entire longitudinal length of said inner construct.

9. (new) The invention of claim 8 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned along the entire longitudinal length of said inner construct, but is positioned on less than 50% thereof.

10. (new) The invention of claim 2 wherein said elastomer layer is constructed of a material that has an ultimate elongation that is approximately equal to or greater than 100%, such that it can be stretched to at least

approximately double its length at rest without rupture, and when released, returns quickly to approximately its pre-stretched length.

11. (new) The invention of claim 2 wherein said elastomer layer has a thickness at rest such that when applied between said first and second constructs, the distance therebetween is less than 1/16<sup>th</sup> inch.

12. (new) The invention of claim 2 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned around the entire lateral periphery of said inner construct.

13. (new) The invention of claim 2 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned around the entire lateral periphery of said inner construct, but is positioned on less than 50% of the periphery of said inner construct.

14. (new) The invention of claim 2 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned along the entire longitudinal length of said inner construct.

15. (new) The invention of claim 14 wherein said elastomer layer is not positioned along the entire longitudinal length of said inner construct, but is positioned on less than 50% thereof.

16. (new) The method of claim 3 wherein the step of inserting the lower region of the cured hockey stick shaft into the heel region of the uncured hockey stick blade pre-form further comprises insertion using a rotational motion in which said heel region comprises an open slot into which said lower region is rotated into

position, such that upon full insertion, one side of said lower region becomes the back side of said blade portion.

[end of claims]